



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Moms Raising Sons to be Men- Part 1

**Guest(s):** Rhonda Stoppe

**Air Date:** July 7, 2021

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

**Roger Marsh:** Every mother knows that parenting isn't all Pinterest crafts, and Instagram worthy photo ops. In fact, motherhood can be filled with long days, messy cars, and mac and cheese for dinner three nights in a row, and being a mom to boys brings its own unique set of trials and challenges. But mothers of boys have a special calling to shape future men of God. Our guest today here on Family Talk is Rhonda Stoppe and she knows firsthand how this privilege can be a challenge, a joy, and probably the most important work of a woman's life. I'm Roger Marsh, and you're listening to Family Talk, the listener supported broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Today here on the program, you're going to hear a classic conversation between author and speaker, Rhonda Stoppe and our own Dr. James Dobson. Rhonda is the founder of No Regrets Woman, a ministry dedicated to helping women live life with no regrets. She connects biblical principles to everyday decisions and shows how to influence that next generation by raising children with integrity. She is the author of several books, including *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*. And that book is the one that she'll be discussing with Dr. Dobson today. Drawing from years of experience ministering to youth women and her two sons, Rhonda Stoppe is a treasure trove of biblical wisdom and advice. So let's listen in right now.

**Dr. James Dobson:** Today, we're going to be discussing a topic that I also think will be of great interest to moms in particular, having to do with the important role godly mothers have in raising godly sons. It's a vitally important topic, and it is expressed most beautifully and a book written by the guest for today. Her name is Rhonda Stoppe and the title of her book is *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*. That's a topic I care about because I've written about it too. And we're going to have fun talking about this subject today, but there is a time for moms and dads to let go of their boys and let them become men. And our guest today writes that if you fail to grant that manhood to your sons, they'll fight you for it. And we're going to talk about that. And we're going to talk about a lot of other things too.

Our guest is the founder of No Regrets Ministry, and I'm going to ask her what that is in a minute. And she speaks across the country, she is very well known by the moms' organization, Mothers Of Preschoolers. And I love those folks and played a role in helping to get it started many years ago. And she speaks at a ministers' wives conferences. Her husband, Steve, is the head pastor of the First Baptist Church Patterson in California. And the two of them have four children and eight grandchildren. And Rhonda you've written four books now, is that correct?

Rhonda Stoppe: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: You had to stop. They're coming so fast. I think your first one was in 2013.

Rhonda Stoppe: Yes, yeah.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, you've got quite a career going here because you're speaking to, what do they say? You're, you're scratching where people itch.

Rhonda Stoppe: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: I think that is true and you have quite a ministry with women primarily don't you, but men and women.

Rhonda Stoppe: Yes, my heart. My ministry is the No Regrets Woman. I help women break free from regrets that hold them back.

Dr. James Dobson: That's an organization. Is that a nonprofit organization?

Rhonda Stoppe: No, it's just my brand. Noregretswoman.com is my website. And I just come alongside of women with truth. I meet women all the time that feel like they've built a regretful life and they don't know how to break free of that. So I want to pour truth into them to help them break free from those regrets that are holding them back.

Dr. James Dobson: When you go to speak and you're talking to 500 women, what are the regrets that you hear at break time?

Rhonda Stoppe: When you go speak at an event, people connect with you and they connect with your message, but you're that anonymous person that they can tell you that thing that they've been wrestling with. And if you've been teaching sound doctrine, they can trust that you're going to direct them, not just your opinion, but you're going to give them a biblical worldview. Jesus said the "Wise man builds his house on the rock, foolish on the house on the sand." And a lot of us it's like, "Man, I just want that shack on the beach. It's so pretty." And that's what women do because it's fast and it's easy and it's beautiful. But when the rains came and the floods come, the house crashes. And so when women can look at the life they've built and they are stuck with shame or guilt or regret,

oftentimes they don't realize that God will set them free from that he has a plan for them.

Rhonda Stoppe: I think of David and Bathsheba. You know, when, when Nathan finally said you are the man to David over his sin. And I think they hid it for about a year, which I can't even imagine him pretending to be a godly king, knowing all of the sin that he and Bathsheba were hiding. But when he finally repented, he says, "Then I will teach sinners your way." Once God let him come to Christ, repent of his sin, and then he could now be effective for the kingdom. And I love that story because right after he repents, he goes in to Bathsheba and God gives her the next king of Israel. She gets to be the mom of the next king of Israel. David had other wives, there were other sons, but I think that picture shows us that when God forgives, he forgives to the utmost and he's got a plan for anyone wherever you are in your season of life.

Let's be honest. I'm 56 years old. And in the '70s, abortion had just become legal and there were women getting abortions. I think last I heard, I believe the statistic was about 45% of women that were my age had had an abortion at some time in their life. And in the Christian community, it wasn't talked about. The youth pastors weren't talking to the kids about it. The parents weren't addressing it. I think there was just a real belief that our kids won't go there. And so a lot of Christian kids, or raised in Christian homes, had abortions and our tax dollars paid for it. And they didn't have to ask anybody for money. They just snuck in and took care of it.

Dr. James Dobson: They didn't have to tell their parents.

Rhonda Stoppe: Did not have to tell their parents. And they didn't. And those women that are holding onto that secret, to that regret, that feel like if anyone ever knew about this thing.

Dr. James Dobson: I thought that might be the regret you hear most often.

Rhonda Stoppe: It is very common, that one and parenting. It's interesting how many women, my age will pick up *Moms Raising Sons to be Men* or even my book *If My Husband Would Change, I'd Be Happy, and Other Myths Wives Believe*. They'll pick up a book. And they'll say, I wish I had this book.

Dr. James Dobson...: Say that little slower because that's a wonderful title. Explain it.

Rhonda Stoppe: *If My Husband Would Change, I'd Be Happy, And Other Myths Wives Believe*. And because my husband and I do marriage counseling and most women, when they can actually get their husband into my husband's office, they're thinking, "Oh good, we're going to fix him and I'm going to be happy," but women will pick up those books and they'll say, "I wish I'd had this book when I was a young mom. I wish I had this book when I was a young wife. I wish someone would

have told me that." And you know, Titus 2 calls the older women to teach the younger, how to love their husbands and love their children.

Dr. James Dobson: That's really how you perceive yourself.

Rhonda Stoppe: I'm a mentor. The Bible talks about our adequacy comes from the Lord. My adequacy for my ministry is that God's called me as an older woman in this generation to mentor the younger generation. And if you can just imagine the books that I write, I write the way that I talk, because I meet a lot of young women, women of all ages actually. And they'll say, "I'm not a reader. I don't read." And I'm like, "Time out. You read Facebook all day long. You are a reader. We've established that, but let's write a book that you'll read." Let's write in a conversational manner, where imagine if you had your own personal mentor that just sat with you and talked with you about what women in history, women in scripture, women present day have learned about guiding their sons toward a no regrets life. With the marriage book, let me just teach you from what God has taught me in my marriage, what other women have been able to share. Actually, Steve and I have a book coming out with Harvest House in 2018 and it's called *The Marriage Mentor*. And I'm super excited. It's a couples book. Hardest part about writing that book is getting time to have Steve sit down to write the book because he's a pastor and he's super busy.

Dr. James Dobson: That concept of the Titus 2 woman is a great biblical principle that the women who have lived long enough and made the mistake, have the regrets, but have overcome them and the Lord has given them knowledge and wisdom, and they really need to pass that on to the younger women who are struggling.

Rhonda Stoppe: And it's God's journeymen teach the apprentice program. It's not optional. God, didn't say "Some of y'all." He said, "All y'all." Older women teach the younger how to love their husbands and love their children. And everywhere I go, I meet women that say, "I don't have any godly mentors in my life. Will you be my mentor?" And I hand them a book and say, "Here, I'll walk with you through these pages." I mentor the young women in my life. I have two adult daughters raising my grandchildren. I have two daughters-in-law that are married to my sons. I have women in our church that I mentor and come alongside of. It's important that women find real life, flesh and bone, godly mentors.

And I'll speak to the older women. We're dropping the ball. The older women are saying "I'm too busy, or I didn't do it the way I should have. And I have shame about the way I" fill in the blank, but I'll tell you this. I teach more passionately from my failures than I do from my successes. And I think that's why God called the older women to teach the younger. "I've walked this path ahead of you. Man, if I had to do over I to do it differently this way." So that's really my heart and my ministry.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, the title of this book is *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*. Now you've got two sons of your own. They're grown. They're both very successful. You're proud of

both of them, but there are a lot of pitfalls on the way from early childhood to adulthood, and that's what you want to talk about in this book.

Rhonda Stoppe: Yes. And let me just time out and say, when you said my sons are successful and my daughters are successful, my sons-in-law are successful. What I see as success is that each one of them love the Lord and are desiring to follow him and serve them with their life. My husband has said, he was a youth pastor for 18 years. He's been a pastor for almost 18 years in Patterson, but he has said to so many of our youth, "I don't care if you grew up in dig ditches for a living. If you're serving the Lord and loving him with all of your heart, then you are a success."

And I think that's important that we teach that to our kids. Especially in this culture of shoving kids out there, they're playing every sport out there. I mean, kids are having elbow replacement surgeries when they're in high school. I mean, they're just playing sports 24/7, which I'm not against sports, but we are pushing our kids. And we're captivated. The captivity of activity keeps us so busy doing good things, raising, quote, good kids, but we're forgetting that the priority of life is to know Christ and make Christ known in this generation.

Dr. James Dobson: Go back to that quote that you express. That it is possible for a mother to deny a boy his manhood as he grows up. Explain what the threat is here.

Rhonda Stoppe: Well, I scanned over your book about raising boys last night and I loved the scientific, technical, brain part that you talked about testosterone and it goes across this, the brains of our kids. My husband always calls junior highers pre-humans because they're great. And then they're not. And then they come back if you hang in there long enough. But what I have found in 18 years of watching youth ministry, and there's a cool thing about being in ministry is that you get to see firsthand the effects of the choices that people make in life. And you get to learn from other people's mistakes, successes, or failures, which is an awesome, awesome opportunity.

But what I have found is when boys hit that adolescent age and it's 10, 11, 12 years old, you'll know when it happens, they start smelling kind of funky. And all of a sudden they have that attitude that you don't know what happened. You'll know that they are turning into men. Well, men crave respect. So I always tell moms for the first decade of your little boy's life, you love the snot out of them. "Mommy will step in front of a moving train for you. Mommy loves you, loves you, loves you." And you just gush all over them. And yet when they hit junior high and they start pushing you away, which Brandon was 10, my youngest, you have a decision to make because they want to be a man. And most of our young men ... There is no coming of man culture, ritual in our culture. I wish there was. Go kill a fatted calf, walk on some hot coals and we'll call you a man. No, there isn't. The only ritual is don't be a momma's boy and they get it. So they start pushing mom away and mom freaks out and I speak it a lot.

Dr. James Dobson: This is really, really important, Rhonda, for mothers to understand that because when they feel that, that they're being pushed away, it's threatening.

Rhonda Stoppe: It hurts.

Dr. James Dobson: And it hurts like crazy. And their tendency is to grab and hold. You must not do that.

Rhonda Stoppe: Exactly. And so when that happens, do you have a choice to make you either hand them their manhood or they will fight you for it or they'll become a momma's boy and they'll be on your couch when they're 40, and that's a whole nother issue that you're going to have to deal with. But when that happens, you have to understand, okay, men crave respect. So now I need to show this little boy. I respect you. The things that I see, the kind of man you're going to be, and I'm here to help you get there. When our youngest son, Brandon, when he started doing that and he and I were super close and he started pushing me away. And I remember just being like, "Dude, it's you and me, what's going on?" And as he pushed me away, I tried to control it.

He didn't want to sweep the porch and the kitchen floor, it's like it was beneath him. Well, he'd done it for so many years, but all of a sudden, a mom can look at that as rebellion or you can go, "Men want to take pride in the work that they do. Now, I'm going to sweep that floor tomorrow and I'm going to do it again the next day. And I'm going to do it again the next day and I'm going to do it." But if I want my son to go where he's trying to go as a man, I have to be willing to say he needs to do something, number one, that he answers to a man that's going to affirm him. And if you're a single mom, don't shut me out because single moms right away go, "I don't have that." And you do, in the community and the family of God. And we can talk about single moms in a moment.

But what we did with Brandon ...Steve came home and I was crying one day. And here's the thing. Brandon's like, "If Dad wasn't a pastor, I could go do this and this." Like, "No. If your dad was still swinging a hammer, you wouldn't be skateboarding with those kids across town because that's not going to happen." You know, "If you cared, you'd let me ..." They say whatever they get to make you cry. And I remember what Brandon said later, he's 29 years old now. But he said, "When you stopped crying, I knew I had lost control." And it's like, "Okay." But he didn't tell me that when he was a teenager, but Steve stepped in and he said, "Okay, you answer to me now, you don't answer your mom anymore. You answer to me and you work for me and you do what I tell you to do." And then Steve told me, "Now you don't step in. You don't give him a chore. If he doesn't do what I told him to do, you don't remind him. You let me deal with him." Well, every mom in here knows you're like, "Buddy, do it or you're going to get in trouble." We try to rescue them, right?

Dr. James Dobson: Rhonda, let me give you a story.

Rhonda Stoppe: Okay, good.

Dr. James Dobson: Of my own childhood and my own adolescence, because we experienced this, my mom and me. But by this point I was 16 years of age. I had been offered a job, temporary job, summer job as a deck hand on a shrimp boat. There's dangers on shrimp boats. You can fall in and drown is what you can do. And it's also a tough, tough men's world. The other people who were working there were hardly Christian church people and I was offered this job and I wanted to do it. And my mother was afraid I'd get hurt. And she didn't want me to go. And she argued with me about going. And I finally turned to her and she referred to this many times in years to come. I turned to her and said, "How long are you going to make me a little boy? When are you going to let me become a man?" Exactly what you're talking about. I was 16 and I was feeling it that my mother was trying to protect me from this and she had a reason for doing that, because that was a dangerous world that I was going into. And with that, she said, "You can go." And she gave up and she allowed me to do that.

Rhonda Stoppe: And you verbalized it.

Dr. James Dobson: And she felt good about it. And I did too, especially because I came back alive.

Rhonda Stoppe: And you verbalized it. See, most boys don't know how to put it into words. And I heard this a lot. "Just let me live my own life." Moms telling us that teenage boys were saying those words to them. And the moms are trying to keep them safe from everything around them. And it causes them to rebel against that. So Steve had come home and he gave Brandon the job of digging a ditch. We live on a ranch and he wanted him to dig a ditch from our house to over where our barn was, about the length of a football field maybe, I'm not exactly sure. Pick and shovel, hard ground. And Steve told me, now in the morning, when Steve left for work, he said, "Don't you remind him. And if he doesn't do it, you don't remind him. You let him answer to me."

So, I didn't say anything. And Brandon who was thinking, "Yay, I don't have to answer to crazy lady anymore. I don't have to sweep that floor." He comes out, eats breakfast, doesn't talk to me. And then he goes out and he starts digging with this pick and shovel and it's hard work. And when he came in that night, I fully expected him to be upset that he had to work so hard, mad that I had thrown him under the bus, told his dad what a hard time he'd been given me and now he had this manual labor. Instead. He was like, "I can't wait for dad to get home so I can show him how far I got." And Steve came home and he's like, "Dad, look, do you have any gloves?"

Dr. James Dobson: He felt like a man.

Rhonda Stoppe: "Do you have any gloves I can wear?" Because he's a musician, plays guitar. He was going to play worship that weekend. And he was getting blisters from the pick and shovel. Steve gave him gloves. He dug until he got to ... took, I don't

even know how many days to get to it. And then they ran wire and they put power in the barn. So there was a purpose in digging the ditch. It was to bring electricity to the barn. You would have thought they were lighting the Taj Mahal the day that that was accomplished. But I learned something about men that day, that they want a job they can take pride, see something at the end of the day that they did.

Dr. James Dobson: That I'll give you another example of it. Two years later, my mother had learned something. My dad was an evangelist and he was leaving for a revival service and wanted to take my mother with him. Do you know this story?

Rhonda Stoppe: I know this story. Go.

Dr. James Dobson: It's in one of my books. And he wanted my mother to go with him. She did. And she left me at home with the car in a house with nobody there, but friends, you know what teenagers are like. And every night I could invite different friends to come and we have slumber parties, one after another. And she was gone for 10 days. And without my having any supervision whatsoever and having a car and the house at my disposal. And I remember thinking that was pretty risky. I wondered why she did that. And years later I asked her, I said, "Mom, for you to turn me loose with the car and, and the house, kids can get into a lot of trouble." Matter of fact, we wrecked the house and then we took a day to repair everything before she got home.

Rhonda Stoppe: Smart man.

Dr. James Dobson: But I asked her why she did that. And she said, "Because I knew one year later, you were going to be in college. You were going to be completely out of my reach. And you would be off doing anything you wanted to, you would have no accountability except whatever the college would provide, which wasn't much." And she said, "I wanted to give you some experience doing that." She thought that through. My mother was a wise woman.

Rhonda Stoppe: She was. And we need older women that are going to speak those kinds of truths into the lives of the younger women. We need them that are going to say, "This is what I did." There's a quote in *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*, and it says, "We're not trying to raise perfect children. We're trying to raise children that know how to recover from their mistakes." And if we keep them in a bubble where they don't have any opportunities to make poor choices, when they move out of our house and they make those poor choices, they don't know how to come back. They don't know how to repent to the Lord. They don't know how we're going to handle it, because they've been the perfect golden child or whatever.

Instead, giving them opportunities, giving them like what your mom did for you. Your son stays up all night, playing video games. Guess what? Get up, go to school. You don't make it easy on them. But I know, my son-in-law was an RD at



the Master's College. And he said there was a lot of times that these kids would come from these very protected homes and they would come to school and they had never been exposed to the internet or video games or a lot of other things. And these kids would spend their first semester playing the roommate's video games all night long and not going to class. They had never learned how to discipline themselves with that kind of entertainment. Now I'm not saying, and I think everybody has to be convicted in your own home, how you're going to allow internet or you're going to allow video games. But I do think it is a way to teach self-discipline. It's a way to say "it's out there."

Dr. James Dobson: What you're saying in essence, is that if they make mistakes, you allow the consequences to impinge on them.

Rhonda Stoppe: Yes. Let them feel it.

Dr. James Dobson: We're out of time, Rhonda. We've got, there's so much to talk about in your book of course. Let's go right onto tomorrow to another discussion of this topic and the name of the book is *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*. And you've raised two of them. And I want to talk to you more about how you did it. As a matter of fact, let me tell you where I want to start. Now, you're a loving mom. You're very committed to your family and your children, the Christian mom, and these issues were running around in your head. It's why you wrote the book, but I want to know how the empty nest hit you. Will you tell me?

Rhonda Stoppe: Yes.

Dr. James Dobson: We'll start right there on the next program.

Rhonda Stoppe: Okay. Okay.

Dr. James Dobson: Be with us again.

Rhonda Stoppe: Okay.

Roger Marsh: Encouraging words from Rhonda Stoppe author, speaker and founder of No Regrets Woman. To learn more about Rhonda, her ministry, or her books visit our broadcast page at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org). Again, that web address is [drjamesdobson.org/broadcast](http://drjamesdobson.org/broadcast). Rhonda's book *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*, which is the topic of today's and will be tomorrow's broadcast as well, is now available in audio book format. So if you're an auditory learner, you'll definitely want to give it a listen. And while you're on our website at [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), be sure to check out our other resources for parents as well. We aim to encourage Christian parents with biblical truths and principles for raising godly children. Again, our web address is [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org).

Now, before we leave for today, I want to fill you in on some exciting news thanks to some special friends of our ministry. We currently have a matching

grant, \$300,000 matching grant, set aside for the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Now this means that right now, any gift that we received from listeners will be matched and your tax deductible donation to our ministry will be doubled. So if you give \$100, that becomes 200, 1,000 becomes 2,000, you get the idea. Until we meet our goal of \$300,000 this match is in place. It means twice as many parents will be encouraged, twice as many families provided with the resources they need to make a tax deductible donation. It's really easy. Visit [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org) or call us at (877) 732-6825 that's (877) 732-6825.

Make sure you join us again tomorrow and you'll hear the conclusion of Dr. Dobson's conversation with Rhonda Stoppe. They'll be talking about becoming an empty nester and how to use that season of life to better serve God and others. You'll hear all that and more right here on the next edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. Thanks for listening.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.